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CALCULI

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vite). Periodically this cat continued to pass blood, but radiography did not reveal any further stone formation.

Numerous references in veterinary literature have been made regarding "high ash" fish diets as possible precursors to calculi formation. After the experimental group had been on the "whole fish with cereal" canned food diet exclusively for two years, it was decided to form a third group, made up of cats from the experimental group, for the purpose of investigating these references. On November 20, 1953, twelve cats from group II were selected to be placed on a high ash fish diet. This group consisted of ten neuters and two females and was labeled "Group III". A second commercial cat food was selected for this experiment. The average ash of the food fed these twelve cats throughout the high ash experiment was 6.45 per cent as determined by George Wilkinson, Biochemist.

On June 8, 1954, one cat of group III, a neutered male, died. An autopsy by Dr. R. D. Lewis, pathologist, Huntington Memorial Hospital, showed that this cat died of "some type of metabolic disease possibly due to dietary deficiency of unknown type . . . ".

On November 5, 1954, the remaining eleven cats in group III had been fed 351 days. The calculated weight of the high ash food was 2,169 pounds. This was offered as 4,062 feedings, and the average offered per cat per day was 8.54 ounces. At the end of 351 days no clinical symptoms of calculus formation had occurred. It is planned to carry these cats on the high ash diet exclusively for an undetermined period.

Of interest in this general discussion is a paper entitled, "Urolithiases in Dogs and Cats," which was presented at the 67th annual general meeting and congress of the National Veterinary Medical Association in London, August 12, 1949, by Dr. Agnete Krabbe. During a discussion of this paper, Dr. Gajentaan and Mr. Peters stated that in Europe, at the beginning of the war in 1939, when it was impossible to obtain meat for cats, they subsisted on a practically 100 per cent fish diet. During the time the animals were on a fish diet, cats having vesical calculi were virtually unheard of. However, after the war, and when meat was available again, cases began to appear.

As another sidelight, in a paper presented at the 21st annual meeting of the American Animal Hospital Association in New York, May 5-8, 1954, it was stated that in a research colony, cats developed neurological symptoms after being on a fish diet for 40 days, and that autopsy reports showed chronic damage to the nervous system. It was also reported that some of the research cats developed an acute dermatitis "in the nature of feline ringworm." Our extensive research program has not substantiated any of these findings.

In summary, Group I, consisting of 25 cats was fed on fresh horsemeat, with supplements of fresh liver, fresh milk, thiamine, and a vitamin-calcium preparation. True cystic calculi were recovered from two cats (22, a neuter, and 21, an unaltered female). Calculi from cat 22 were of the calcium phosphate type and a large calculus from cat 21 consisted of magnesium ammonium phosphate.

Group II, consisting of 50 cats, received an exclusive diet of a commercial cat food whose main ingredient is whole fish with a small percentage of selected cereals. Forty of these cats received a supplement of thiamine for a period during the experiment, but this supplementation was discontinued for all cats in this group as of July 30, 1954. Ten cats received no thiamine. None of the cats of this group developed true vesical calculi. Cat 26 (a neuter) developed a mucous "plug" of soft, "putty-like" material.

In the group III cats, ten neuters and two females (one neuter died, after 201 days, of "some type of metabolic disease, possibly due to a dietary deficiency of unknown type"), by the end of 351 days, not a single clinical case of calculus formation developed.

Thus, this controlled study of feeding 50 standardized cats for a period of 33 months on a canned cat food diet indicated the diet consisting of processed whole fish plus selected cereals did not cause the formation of vesical calculi, nor were we able to produce urinary stones by feeding cats on the canned high ash diet.

There is still a great deal of research to be done on this subject, and until such time as the basic dietary requirements of the cat, including minerals and vitamins, are determined, and quantitive and qualitative analyses of the blood and urine of the cat are made, no valid scientific conclusions can be drawn as to the causes of the formation of vesical calculi in cats.

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